



*How to choose your own pace of life*

# Slow down!



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*How can we choose our own pace of life?*

Modern life takes place at a frenetic pace. We are surrounded by influences – including the media, employers and even friends – telling us to go faster, take more action and be more productive with our time. It is easy to be swept along by this culture of speed and productivity, and easy to lose sight of the fact that each of us actually has a choice as to the pace of life we adopt.

Some people may enjoy busy, frantic and pressurised lives, but many other people will find this way of living extremely stressful, and won't want to reach the end of their lives wishing they'd taken more time to enjoy the journey;

The poster on the other side of this leaflet provides a list of things you can do to challenge the modern 'culture of speed', so that you can make an informed choice as to which pace of life suits you best. These are just initial ideas to get you started. Check out the Life? website for more ideas and links to organisations that can help you to live a happier, wiser and more meaningful life – [www.lifesquared.org.uk](http://www.lifesquared.org.uk)

### *1. Realise you have a choice*

Ignore the influences from friends, the media and wider society telling you how you should run your relationship with time. In modern life, these are usually telling you to go faster or be more productive with your time. It is up to you how you conduct your relationship with time, and the first thing to do is realise this and take control of it.

### *2. Ignore the rushers*

Don't make yourself anxious by comparing yourself to people who live rushed, busy and stressed lives. Be happy with your identity and choices, including the decision to live a slower life if you feel this suits you.

### *3. Have some daily reflection time*

Start taking control of your relationship with time by allowing yourself some time (as little as ten minutes) each day to sit quietly without disturbance, close your eyes, relax and remove yourself from the rush. Activities such as meditation, yoga or walking in the countryside can help this process, but choose the way that suits you best.

### *4. Make stuff rather than buy it*

We often feel so pressured by time that we buy ready-made things we could easily make ourselves – from food to birthday cards. When you get the chance, take the time to make your own. Not only can this give you real pleasure and fulfilment, but also the end result is often better than the shop-bought version.

### *5. Write letters*

When you want to get back in touch with a good friend, rediscover the lost

art of letter writing rather than emailing. Not only is it a great way to slow down, but it is also a chance to really think about that person and what you want to say to them, and everyone loves to receive letters.

### *6. Grow a garden*

It doesn't matter if you have a window box or a full garden - growing things puts us in touch with the slower speeds and cycles of nature, and puts the fast-paced modern world into perspective.

### *7. Waste time*

It sounds like heresy, but why not just ignore some of the things you've planned into your day and just do something else – perhaps even nothing - instead? Doing this can be fun, and remind us that we set our own rules about how we live.

### *8. Shop locally*

One of the reasons people shop in huge out-of-town supermarkets is to save time, but if you allow yourself the time to visit your local shops instead, this can be a far more sociable and relaxed experience. It can also be an opportunity to build social networks, enjoy your local area and find out about what is going on nearby.

### *9. Give people more time*

Our relationships with other people are some of the most important things in our lives. One of the biggest benefits of slowing down is that it gives you more time to engage properly with people. Allow yourself the time to chat with your neighbours, call your family or stay on the phone a bit longer with your friends.

### *10. Throw away your alarm clock*

Why should you be woken up by the shriek of your alarm clock every day? We can control our own waking patterns naturally, and wake at the time we want to without having to be controlled by our alarm clocks.

